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PSC 322.01: Politics of Europe

Eric H. Hines

University of Montana - Missoula, eric.hines@umontana.edu

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PSCI 322: Politics of Europe

TR 12:10-1:30 p.m., Forestry 305

Europe has lived on its contradictions, flourished on its differences, and, constantly transcending itself thereby, has created a civilization on which the whole world depends even when rejecting it.

— ALBERT CAMUS (1913–1960), FRENCH-ALGERIAN PHILOSOPHER

Course Description

This course introduces students to the postwar history and politics of Europe. It is the story of the gradual breakdown of two uneasy political alliances forged in a time of necessity. One has been since been dumped in the dustbin of history while the other has seemingly outlived its usefulness. The course is organized around six interrelated themes — representation, parliamentarianism, socialism, nationalism, democratization, and integration — and the challenges they pose to the modern European nation-state.

Course Philosophy

Learning is using information to gain an understanding of how things work and how to make them better which requires enhancing your ability to:

- ask the right questions and frame good problems,
- acquire information and evaluate sources of information,
- critically investigate and solve problems,
- make choices among different alternatives,
- explain concepts to others both verbally and in writing and,
- generalize to new situations.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Use comparative analysis and causal reasoning to explain political phenomena.
- Evaluate the comparative effectiveness of democratic institutions.
- Understand the motivations of and constraints imposed on political actors.
- Explain key concepts to others both verbally and in writing.
- Generalize conceptual knowledge to new situations.
- Evaluate sources of information according to high scholarly standards.

Required Materials

There are two required texts available at the UC Bookstore:

Crepaz, Marcus and Jürg Steiner. 2009. *European Democracies*, 6th Edition. New York: Pearson Longman. ISBN: 9780205642571.

Hitchcock, William. 2004. *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent 1945 to the Present*. New York: Anchor Books. ISBN: 0385497997.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students have the responsibility to attend class regularly and complete all assigned readings before coming to class.
2. Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor beforehand of any reasons why they are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time.
3. Students have the responsibility to complete all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor.
4. Students have the responsibility to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. University policy on incompletes will be adhered to strictly.

Academic Misconduct Policy

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: <http://www.umd.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

Statement On Disabilities:

I strongly encourage students with documented disabilities to discuss appropriate accommodations with me, but I am not qualified to make an assessment of your need for an accommodation. If you feel you need accommodations in this course please provide a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

Course Requirements

Homework

Students will complete several short homework assignments on Blackboard.

Election Simulation (Reaction paper due Tuesday, October 20, 2009)

Students will participate in a simulated election to gain experience with a PR electoral system and the process of government formation in a multi-party system. Assessment will include a series of homework assignments and a take-home midterm.

Final Paper (Due in class on Thursday, December 10, 2009)

Students will write a 10-12 page research paper applying one of two methods of causal analysis and requiring substantial library research to systemically explain variations in policy outcomes in European countries. Full guidelines are available on Blackboard.

Grading

Grades will be based on points distributed between homework (300 points), preparation for and assessment of the election simulation (300), and final paper (400 points).

The plus/minus grading system will be used with grades based on the total points: A = 1000-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-639, F = <600.

Course Schedule

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule as the semester develops.

Course Schedule

Prologue

Sept. 1: Introduction of course and distribution of syllabus.

Sept. 3: What is Europe and what makes it distinct? (*Read C & S, Chapter 1*)

Introduction: The Aftermath of World War II

Sept. 8: The Postwar Settlement I (*Read H, Chapters 1 & 2*)

Sept. 10: The Postwar Settlement II (*Read H, Chapters 3 & 4*)

Part I: Representation and Parliamentarianism

Sept. 15: Political Parties (*Read C & S, Chapter 2*)

Sept. 17: Electoral Systems (*Read C & S, Chapter 3*)

Sept. 22: Executive-Legislative Relations (*Read C & S, Chapter 4*)

Sept. 24: Courts, Federalism, and Referendum (*Read C & S, Chapters 5-6*)

Sept. 29: Politics outside of Parliament: Social Movements (*Read C & S, Chapter 7*)

Oct. 1: Politics outside of Parliament: Corporatism (*Read C & S, Chapter 8*)

Oct. 6: *German Election Simulation*

Oct. 8: *German Election Simulation*

Part II: Policy Outcomes

Oct. 13: Policy Outcomes (*Read C & S, Chapter 9*)

Oct. 15: European Social Models (Read Sapir via Blackboard).

Oct. 20: Post-War Boom; **Reaction Papers Due** (Read H, Chapters 5-6)

Oct. 22: Library Research Exercise (Student Learning Center, Mansfield Library)

Oct. 27: Khrushchev and De Gaulle (Read H, Chapters 7-8)

Oct. 29: Europe and its discontents (Read H, Chapter 9)

Nov. 3: The Thatcher Revolution? (Read H, Chapter 12)

Part III: Democratization and the End of the Cold War

Nov. 5: Democratization in the South; Spring in the East (Read H, Chapters 10-11)

Nov. 10: The End of the Cold War (Read C & S, Chapter 10, and H, Chapter 13)

Part IV: Nationalism versus Integration

Nov. 12: Nationalism and Ethnicity (Read C & S, Chapter 12 and H, Chapter 15)

Nov. 17-19: *Film:* No Man's Land (2001) (Read H, Chapter 14; C & S, Chapter 13)

Nov. 24: European Popular Culture (i.e., Eurovision!)

Dec. 1-3: *Film:* The Spanish Apartment (2002)

Dec. 8-10: European Union (Read C & S, Chapter 14 and H, Chapter 16); Evaluations